

Homeland Belongs to Us All." In this pamphlet, they describe their hopes for a free and democratic Cuba. They were convicted for nothing more than expressing their opinions and speaking the truth. They are the Lech Walensas & Vaclav Havels of Cuba. Their trial and conviction came two weeks after Castro handed down his new Sedition Law to severely punish those who dare speak to foreign journalists or publicly criticize his revolution.

Under the new Sedition Law, they were arrested for holding news conferences with foreign journalists and diplomats, urging voters to boycott Cuba's one-party elections, warning foreigners that their investments would contribute to Cuban suffering, condemning Castro's grip on power, and criticizing Communist Party propaganda. Mr. Speaker, this sounds to me like a return to the gulags of Soviet communism and the horror of European fascism.

They were apprehended and jailed 1½ years ago for their "crimes". On top of the imprisonment and physical and mental mistreatment they endured for more than 600 days, the four freedom fighters were also forced to endure a Stalinist show trial. As a recent wire report observed, in keeping with the closed, totalitarian nature of the Castro regime, "Few Cubans and even fewer foreigners are allowed inside a Cuban courtroom. Trials tend to be closed and proceedings are rarely reported by the government-controlled media." But Castro eagerly allowed the cameras to roll during the trial of these four dissidents to send a message to the rest of the island: Anyone who threatens his regime will be punished severely. Cuban reporters are terrified of the new Sedition Law; it has empowered Castro's secret police to intensify their harassment of Cuba's already-stifled press.

The dissidents received prison sentences ranging from 3½ to 5 years. The independent Cuban Commission on Human Rights and National Reconciliation said that since Feb. 26, 1999, authorities had rounded up nearly 40 other dissidents and warned an additional 35 to remain at home during the March 1st trial. Officials from the U.S. Interest Section in Havana were denied access to the trial.

The State Department recently released this statement regarding the trial: "We strongly denounce these actions by the Cuban government, which reveal its utter disregard of the concerns of the international community." Yet, neither the president nor the secretary of state has taken any action to put muscle behind those words. In fact, underscoring its perverse misunderstanding of the situation, the State Department believes the trial and conviction of these four voices of freedom is the very reason we need more people-to-people contacts with Havana. The only thing more people-to-people contacts will do is further prop-up Castro's regime.

Finally, it should be noted that the Sedition Law was approved by Castro just weeks after the president's January announcement that he was easing the embargo.

Mr. Speaker, I must also report even more disturbing news to my colleagues. I believe we have an administration that is so hellbent on normalizing relations with Cuba that it is willing to overlook allegations of drug-trafficking.

On December 3, 1998, the Colombian National Police seized 7.5 tons of cocaine headed for Cuba, and eventually likely the United States and elsewhere. I have sent investigators down there who were able to put together

the pieces of the puzzle in three days which our government, the ONDCP, DEA, CIA, and White House have either not been willing to do, or worse do not want to put together.

I have a letter from Barry McCaffrey which says there is no evidence that the Castro government is involved in drug-trafficking, ignoring the fact that Castro's brother, Raul, has been under indictment in Miami since the early 1990's for drug-trafficking and racketeering. Also, Ileana de la Guardia, the daughter of executed Cuban Colonel Tony de la Guardia, is currently involved in a court case in France where she alleges that drug trafficking reaches the "highest echelons" of the Cuban government.

What is the problem with this administration when it comes to Fidel Castro? Why does the White House continue to ignore the grim and brutal realities of Castro's dictatorship? I don't know the answer, but I believe it goes beyond a simple disagreement on policy. How we can turn a blind eye to Castro's behavior and even reward him is truly beyond me.

What is obvious is the fact that this White House will do anything to normalize relations with the last dictator in the Western Hemisphere. The White House wants to dilute and then eliminate the Burton-Helms Embargo; the White House is flouting the law, ignoring the will of the American people, and tossing aside four decades of bipartisan agreement on Castro. It is left to us in Congress to do what is right.

Mr. Speaker, I join my fellow cosponsors in support of H. Res. 99. Let's do everything we can to keep the heat on Castro and his gulags. As a Houston Chronicle editorial recently observed, "This is no time to play ball with Fidel Castro."

#### TRIBUTE TO KATHY ADAMSON

##### HON. ANNA G. ESHOO

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, March 24, 1999*

Ms. ESHOO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Kathy Adamson, an extraordinary citizen of San Mateo County, California, who will be inducted into the San Mateo County Women's Hall of Fame on Friday, March 26, 1999.

A native of Redwood City, Kathy Adamson has been a foster parent to more than four hundred children ranging in age from newborn to sixteen. Children in her temporary care have included drug exposed infants, shaken babies, toddlers, children with Attention Deficit Disorders, and adolescent girls. Kathy's home became a hospice for terminally ill infants, many of whom died in her loving arms. Since 1995 she has worked with San Mateo County Mental Health as an independent contractor, providing a variety of programs designed to help support parents and children in need. In recognition of her professionalism, her exceptional work and her compassion, Kathy was elected President of the San Mateo County Foster Care Association.

Mr. Speaker, Kathy Adamson is an outstanding woman and I salute her for her remarkable contributions and commitment to our community. I ask my colleagues to join me in honoring her on being inducted into the San Mateo County Woman's Hall of Fame.

#### TRIBUTE TO ROBERT "PETERBO" BANKHEAD

##### HON. BENNIE G. THOMPSON

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, March 24, 1999*

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, I stand here today to pay tribute in memory of Mr. Robert "Peterbo" Bankhead, who recently passed. He was not only a County Supervisor in my district, the 2nd Congressional District, but also a personal and dear friend to me. It is very hard to effectively portray in a short amount of time to you the true heart, spirit, and countless deeds of Mr. Robert "Peterbo" Bankhead.

Mr. Robert "Peterbo" Bankhead was born on August 30, 1999. He attended Humphreys County High School in Belzoni, Mississippi where he was a member of the first class to graduate from Humphreys County High School. He graduated from Mississippi Valley State University with a Bachelor of Science degree in Criminal Justice in 1977. Additionally, he graduated from MATC (Milwaukee Area Technical College) with a degree in the Culinary Arts. He opened Peterbo's Restaurant in 1974 in Isola, Mississippi where it remains today. During the life of Robert Bankhead, he received several social and community awards for his countless hours, and dedication. He was life-time member of Mississippi Valley State Alumni, the Mississippi Restaurant's Association, and served as Beat 1 Supervisor for Humphrey County for two consecutive terms.

Robert will always be remembered as a person willing to go the extra mile. In closing, Mr. Speaker I would like to say that Robert has made a tremendous contribution to the future of America. His work was pivotal and instrumental in the overall success of my 1996 and 1998 campaign. My prayers go out to his family and his contributions will be remembered in Mississippi, specifically the 2nd Congressional District for years to come.

#### A BLOOMIN' GOOD FAMILY AND THEIR BLOOMIN' GOOD BUSINESS

##### HON. JAMES A. BARCIA

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, March 24, 1999*

Mr. BARCIA. Mr. Speaker, all around Washington the crocuses and forsythia are starting to bloom, and for some it is a daily ritual to see whether or not the famed cherry blossoms have started to hail the true start of spring. The people of Saginaw, Michigan, may not have the same early blooms or the Tidal Basin ritual, but they have something better—McDonald's Nursery which is celebrating its 70th anniversary this week.

Seventy years ago, Dr. Francis J. McDonald, a dentist with a vision for the beauty of nature, started McDonald's Nursery as a hobby. He bought five acres of land off Seidel Road with a 400-year old beech tree on it. He dug a well that to this day supplies water to the nursery, and with his children, Joe, Jim, Mary, Catherine and Tom, he planted trees. Today those trees provide a forty foot tall memorial to his legacy. With his wife Mary, he